

U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Attorney Recruitment and Management

Washington, D.C. 20530

October 9, 2003

TO: All Attorney General's Honors Program Applicants Selected for Interviews

FROM: Deana M. C. Willis
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Office of Attorney Recruitment and Management

SUBJECT: Travel and Interview Information

Congratulations on your selection for an interview with the Department of Justice. We want your interview experience to be positive, so please read this entire memorandum carefully. It explains what you need to do to schedule your interview, provides information about travel costs, tells you where to go and what to bring, and answers many other important questions falling under the areas listed below:

- Interview Scheduling
- Travel Costs
 - ▶ What costs are paid for by the Department?
 - ▶ What costs are not paid for by the Department?
- Ground Transportation Between the Airport/Train Station and the Interview/Hotel
- Very Important Information About Interviews
 - ▶ Clearing Security
 - ▶ Interview Sites
- Canceling or Rescheduling Your Interview / Unexpected Extensions of Travel
- Miscellaneous Other Travel Information
- Requesting Reimbursement

A. Interview Scheduling

- All Washington, D.C. interviews are centrally scheduled and will take place between Monday, October 27 and Friday, November 14, 2003 (excluding weekends and Federal holidays).
 - Antitrust Division Field Office interviews may begin any time after notification of selection. Candidates selected by Antitrust Field Offices will be contacted directly by a representative of the Antitrust Division to schedule those interviews. It is possible for candidates selected by more than one component to interview in Washington DC and at an Antitrust field office location.

- As soon as you are notified that you are selected for an interview, complete the [Travel Survey](#) form located on the Honors Program Interviews web page, and fax it to the number listed at the bottom of the form.
- Upon receipt of your Travel Survey, the Department of Justice Conference and Contract Section (CCS) will schedule your interview(s) to permit same-day travel (when possible) to and from Washington, D.C. The Department will fund interview travel only once per candidate; if you were selected for multiple interviews, you can expect them to be scheduled on the same day. *(Certain candidates selected by the Antitrust Division may be interviewed at component expense in other cities. A representative from Antitrust will contact those candidates and arrange their interviews separately).*
- The CCS staff will assign you to a specific interview week and will schedule your interview(s). CCS will make every effort to consider your preferred week and day of the week listed on your Travel Survey, but cannot guarantee that you will receive your preferred week/day as there are many variables affecting Government-contracted travel (such as airline availability, time of flights, etc.). If your final schedule presents a serious conflict, please contact the CCS staff to arrange an alternate date. For fastest results, contact your assigned scheduler (not the Component "Persons to Contact") using the name and telephone number listed on your itinerary. If you are unable to reach your assigned scheduler, the general CCS number for all schedulers is (202) 514-3634.
- Please be patient during the scheduling process. You should hear from your scheduler by the Wednesday prior to the week your interview is scheduled. **Your scheduler will fax your travel authorization, itinerary, and interview schedule to you using the number you list on your Travel Survey.** Please ensure that someone at that location is aware that you are expecting material from the Department and can contact you upon its arrival. The CCS staff will schedule all interviews as quickly as possible; however, the process for booking travel is complex and takes time. The CCS staff will send your travel information as soon as your interview is scheduled and travel reservations made.

B. Travel Costs

1. What costs are paid for by the Department?

- **Planes, trains, . . .** : If you travel by air or train, the Department will charge the cost of transportation to a central account (costs are billed directly to us) and issue an e-ticket to minimize your out-of-pocket expenses. If you are authorized to travel by car (as most advantageous to the Government), the Government will reimburse you 36 cents per mile plus road tolls. If you arrive by air, costs of ground travel between the

airport and the interview site (or, if lodging is authorized, between the airport and either the hotel or the interview site) are reimbursable. We require you to use public transportation for ground travel (e.g., Metrorail) unless you fly into Dulles International Airport. (See paragraph C, below, for more details on ground transportation after arriving at the airport.)

- **. . . And automobiles:** Individuals within driving distance of Washington, D.C., who wish to use their personally owned vehicle (POV), should indicate their interest on the Travel Survey. If this mode of travel is most cost advantageous to the Government, or you are willing to accept the constructive cost of commercial travel in lieu of actual POV costs, then you may drive your car to the interview, provided it is authorized in advance. The term “constructive cost” commonly means the Government contract cost of round trip airfare (or the cost of a round-trip bus or train ticket) from your city of residence (or nearest airport or terminal) to Washington, D.C. Bear in mind that Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area traffic is notoriously heavy and slow, especially during rush hours (between 6:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on workdays), and parking is expensive and sometimes difficult to find. If use of a private automobile is authorized, reimbursement currently is limited to 36 cents per mile, but may also include road tolls. Repair costs, gasoline, towing and alternate means of transportation in the event of a breakdown are not reimbursable. Total reimbursement for use of a private automobile may not exceed the constructive cost of common carrier transportation, and may actually be less. An election to drive based on personal convenience will not entitle you to per diem or to lodging at government expense if same-day travel by commercial carrier is available.
- **Hotel:** Lodging costs are a reimbursable expense, subject to the current Government “per diem” allowances (see below). The Department cannot prepay on your behalf. If your approved schedule requires an overnight stay, the Department will book a reservation for you at a hotel that accepts the Government rate. Once you receive your travel itinerary (which will include your hotel name, confirmation number, and telephone number), you **must** contact the hotel directly and provide a credit card number to guarantee your reservation. In order to avoid “no-show” fees, the Department will cancel all unconfirmed reservations the morning of the scheduled lodging. If you fail to guarantee your reservation prior to that time, you may not have a place to stay when you get to Washington! If you do guarantee the reservation and your travel plans change, be sure to contact the hotel again and make appropriate arrangements in order to avoid “no-show” fees. After your interview, you can request reimbursement for lodging costs and for meals and incidental expenses (authorized at a prorated per diem rate - see *Meals and Incidental Expenses*, below). Absent exigent circumstances, the Department will reimburse you only for one night’s lodging at the unaccompanied rate. The fiscal year 2004 lodging portion of the Washington, D.C. per diem rate is \$150. This amount may change on October 1, 2004. You can find current per diem rates at <http://policyworks.gov/org/main/mt/homepage/mtt/perdiem/perd04d.html>). **You are**

required to present your travel authorization to the desk clerk at the time of check-in, and to request tax exemption. If you run into difficulty with the tax exemption, contact your scheduler during the business day for assistance. The lodging reservations made on your behalf should be within the per diem rate. Should the Department make reservations on your behalf at a higher rate (extremely unlikely), you will be compensated for the total cost of your lodging (less taxes – remember that you are required to request tax exemption). We anticipate that this situation would be addressed prior to your travel; however, in the event it is not, please contact CCS at (202) 514-3634. ***Retain all lodging receipts - you may be asked to submit the original receipt when filing your travel voucher for reimbursement.*** If you decide to extend your stay in Washington, D.C. for personal convenience, or share your room with another person, you must make appropriate arrangements with the hotel and will be responsible for all associated additional costs. Only the actual costs of commercial lodging are reimbursed, less tax. If you elect to stay with family or friends, you will not be compensated. Similarly, if you opt to stay at a less expensive hotel in lieu of the hotel where your reservation is made, your reimbursement is capped at the actual cost of the lodging - you will not receive the difference between the cost of lodging and the maximum lodging portion of the per diem. If you have any questions, contact CCS at (202) 514-3634.

- ***Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE):*** You are eligible for payment of partial per diem to compensate you for meals and incidental expenses ***if and only if*** your interview schedule, including travel, exceeds 12 hours. Regrettably, under the Federal travel regulations, there is no reimbursement authorized for periods of 12 hours or less. (Please note that travelers only receive partial M&IE (75%) on travel days. You can find current per diem rates, which includes M&IE at <http://policyworks.gov/org/main/mt/homepage/mtt/perdiem/perd04d.html>). The current partial per diem M&IE rate for Washington, D.C. (as of October 1, 2004) is \$38.25 a day. This is a reimbursable expense. Upon completion of travel, you must submit a reimbursement form to receive payment. The [reimbursement form](#) is available on the Honors Program Interviews web page, and should be faxed to CCS within 5 business days of completion of travel. Be sure to keep a copy of this form and your receipts. (See paragraph G, below, for instructions on how to request reimbursement).
- Costs associated with a reasonable accommodation based on a disability or a special need that affects your travel may be authorized. Contact the CCS staff at (202) 514-3634 for a case-by-case determination in advance of travel.
- Do not be misled by the amounts listed on your Travel Authorization. Travel Authorizations contain estimated costs - you are not “entitled” to those amounts. The estimates generally are higher than actual reimbursable costs. Your actual reimbursement will be calculated at the rates specified in this memo. Again, do ***not*** rely on the estimated costs listed on the Travel Authorization.

2. What costs are not paid for by the Department?

- The Department will not pay for excess costs resulting from circuitous routes, delays, or luxury accommodations or services unnecessary or unjustified in the performance of official business.
- When same-day travel is possible, the Department will not authorize an overnight stay nor will it reimburse you for lodging costs should you elect to remain overnight or travel by car for personal convenience.
- The Department will not pay for ground transportation between interview sites except in cases where a traveler has a disability or special need that the Department reasonably accommodates based on prior approval by OARM. All interview sites are within walking distance of each other.
- We cannot reimburse you for tips for taxis or, in most cases, for taxi fare. Only candidates arriving at Dulles airport are authorized to use a taxi because there is no Metrorail station at that location (see paragraph C for details). All other air/train travelers must use Metrorail.
- The Department will not authorize reimbursement for any other expenses (e.g., telephone calls, laundry, fax service, etc.).
- If you interview with more than one component, the Department will not pay costs of travel between interview sites. We anticipate consolidating all interviews at the Robert F. Kennedy Main Justice building. If interviews are held in other venues, they will be within a couple of blocks of Main Justice, easily within walking distance.

C. Ground Transportation Between the Airport/Train Station and the Interview/Hotel

- We require candidates to use public transportation (i.e., Metrorail, Metrobus) while in Washington, D.C. Candidates authorized overnight lodging may also use hotel courtesy shuttles between the hotel and the airport, if available. Approved hotels will be near Metrorail stations and either will be within walking distance of Main Justice or a short distance by Metrorail to an alternate interview site (see paragraph D for information about interview sites). Taxi fare will not be reimbursed except as otherwise specified in this memorandum.
- **Candidates arriving at Reagan National Airport:** Most candidates will arrive at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. The fastest, most convenient mode of travel is the Metrorail co-located at the airport. You can find route maps and other information on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority website at www.wmata.com. There is a "Ride Guide" on the web page that permits you to get specific directions to your destination and informs you of the fare required (generally

less than \$2.00). Ground transportation costs to and from the airport, or between lodging and interview sites, other than by Metrorail, will not be reimbursed.

- ***Candidates arriving at Washington Dulles International Airport:*** If you are one of the very few candidates to arrive at Dulles and are authorized overnight lodging, we request that you use a hotel courtesy shuttle, if available, to get to your place of lodging. If you are a same day traveler, or your hotel has no shuttle, then the Department will reimburse you up to \$100.00 for the cost of one round trip taxi fare. Ground transportation between lodging and interview sites should not be required - we anticipate the hotel will be a within walking distance of the Main Justice building. However, if your interview is at an alternate venue that is not within walking distances, then the cost of Metrorail travel will be reimbursed. You can find route maps and other information on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority website at www.wmata.com. There is a "Ride Guide" on the web page that permits you to get specific directions to your destination and informs you of the fare required (generally less than \$2.00).
- ***Candidates arriving at Union Station:*** Just follow the signs to the Metrorail portion of the station. You can find route maps and other information on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority website at www.wmata.com. There is a "Ride Guide" on the web page that permits you to get specific directions to your destination and informs you of the fare required (generally less than \$2.00). Ground transportation costs to and from the airport, or between lodging and interview sites (if beyond walking distance), other than by Metrorail, will not be reimbursed.
- Reimbursement forms must be submitted within five business days from the date of your travel. Receipts are required for lodging and for any other authorized expenses in excess of \$75. Reimbursement generally takes 2 to 3 weeks. (See section B3.)

D. Very Important Information About Interviews

- **Clearing Security:** You will need two forms of photo identification to clear security at the Department of Justice buildings. We strongly recommend that you arrive 30 minutes early in order to go through the security procedures to gain access to DOJ buildings and find your interview room.
- **Interview Sites:** (For supplemental information, see the [Map](#) and [Interview Sites by Component](#) chart on Honors Program Interview web page)
 - **Candidates selected by more than one component** will interview at the Robert F. Kennedy Main Justice Building, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. Use the Visitor's Entrance on Constitution Avenue, between 9th and 10th Streets, NW. The nearest Metro stations are Archives/Navy Memorial (Green/Yellow Lines) (1 block) and Federal Triangle (Blue/Orange Lines) (2 blocks). The CCS staff will provide specific interview dates, times, and room numbers when it sends

your travel authorization and itinerary.

- o Candidates selected **only** by the Civil Division, the Civil Rights Division, the Criminal Division, the Environment and Natural Resources Division, the Executive Office for Immigration Review, or the Tax Division will interview at the Robert F. Kennedy Main Justice Building (see above for directions). The CCS staff will provide specific interview dates, times, and room numbers when it sends your travel authorization and itinerary.
- o Candidates selected **only** by the Antitrust Division, Federal Bureau of Prisons, or the U.S. Trustees Offices will not be interviewing in the Robert F. Kennedy Main Justice Building. These candidates should report to the address listed on the [Interview Sites by Component](#) chart posted on the Honors Program Interview web page.

E. Canceling or Rescheduling Your Interview / Unexpected Extensions of Travel

- Pre-Interview Cancellation or Rescheduling If an emergency requires you to cancel or reschedule your travel, call (800) 685-6342 or the emergency contact number listed on your travel itinerary to cancel your reservations. If lodging was authorized, contact the hotel and cancel that reservation also. You also must notify the CCS Staff at (202) 514-3634 during normal business hours (8:30 - 5:00) so the Department can reschedule your interview and provide further guidance. Under no circumstances are you authorized to seek a refund of the prearranged ticket or make alternate travel arrangements based on redemption or exchange of the prearranged ticket without prior approval. If you exchange the issued ticket without authorization, and the new ticket is more expensive, you must pay the difference using personal funds. The Department will not reimburse you for the extra amount. (Authorization is not required if you are rerouted by the airline during travel.)
- Exigent Circumstances Whether or not you were authorized overnight lodging as part of your original interview schedule, if exigent circumstances require you to remain overnight (e.g., flight cancellation that cannot be rerouted, airport closure, etc.), contact the 24-hour emergency number on your travel itinerary (Omega Travel) and request that they book lodging and, if necessary, make alternate travel arrangements (frequently, airlines will reschedule flights for displaced passengers at the time the flight is cancelled). You also must contact CCS at (202) 514-3634 during business hours for further instructions on how to submit your request for reimbursement to include the new lodging costs. When checking into the hotel, show your travel authorization and request tax exemption. Retain all lodging receipts - you may be asked to submit the original receipt when filing your travel voucher. The maximum reimbursable lodging rate for the Washington, D.C. area (\$150 per day) still applies.

F. Miscellaneous Other Travel Information

- Carrier Selection and Frequent Flier Miles The Department selects airlines based on contract cost to the Government. CCS will not accommodate requests for specific airlines; however, should you happen to accrue frequent flyer miles or other promotional credit based on your travel, you may retain it for your personal use.
- Routing: CCS will route travel based on the terms of Government contracts with the carriers. This may result in intermittent stops, indirect flights, or routing through a carrier hub. Regrettably, you may not alter the route of travel. The Department will not pay for excess costs resulting from circuitous routes, delays, or luxury accommodations or services unnecessary or unjustified in the performance of official business. You are responsible for excess costs and any additional expenses that you incur for personal preference or convenience.
- Timing Your Arrival at the Airport Due to time constraints in scheduling and costs associated with paper tickets, the Department uses "E-Tickets". You should arrive at the airport at least 2 hours before your departure time, and bring two forms of photo identification with you to allow sufficient time to get your e-ticket and clear security prior to boarding.

G. Requesting Reimbursement

- Reimbursement Form Within five business days after interview travel, complete a [reimbursement form](#) (located on the Honors Program Interviews web page) and **fax** it, along with copies of your receipts for expenses of \$75 or more, to your scheduler at (202) 307-0862 (fax). Upon receipt of your reimbursement form, the CCS staff will prepare a formal travel voucher and fax it to you for your signature. After you sign the voucher, you should **mail** it (the Department must have an original signature to process your form) to ***your scheduler at 1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 1070, Washington, D.C. 20530.*** Processing reimbursements generally takes two to three weeks from the date the voucher is received. *(Antitrust candidates interviewed outside Washington DC must deal directly with the Antitrust representative and should not file through the CCS scheduler).*
- Notice of Criminal Penalty If you knowingly present a false, fictitious, or fraudulent travel claim, you may be subject to criminal penalties under Title 18, U.S. Code, §§ 287, 1001.